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NJMC to Launch Action Leading Way For Koppers Coke's Redevelopment

LYNDHURST, N.J. – The New Jersey Meadowlands Commission today announced it will move forward with a formal site investigation of Koppers Coke in Kearny, which is the first step in officially designating the tract in need of redevelopment.

“For years, Hudson County has been attempting to interest developers in cleaning up and reviving this site, but the many obstacles inherent to the site have proved too severe to overcome,” said NJMC Chairman and New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Acting Commissioner Charles A. Richman. “Koppers Coke has the potential to become a valuable asset for Hudson County, and the first step in making that a reality is to designate the area in need of redevelopment.”

If this formal investigation finds that the site meets the statutory criteria of being in need of redevelopment – such as the existence of deteriorating, vacant, abandoned, underutilized or obsolete properties – the NJMC Board may authorize the agency to develop a redevelopment plan, akin to a new set of zoning regulations, that will attract revitalization and clear away obstacles left by existing land use regulations.

Preceding today's action, the NJMC assembled a stakeholder group in December 2004 to analyze redevelopment potential at the site. This was at the request of Hudson County and the Hudson County Improvement Authority. The group included NJMC staff, representatives from other levels of government, academics, real estate professionals, environmental advocates, transportation agency representatives and other business leaders. The group found the area to be a potential boost to the region if properly utilized and managed.

“Koppers Coke is strategically located and has tremendous economic potential,” said NJMC Executive Director Robert Ceberio. “It's one of the diamonds in the rough in the Kearny area. We look forward to continuing working with Hudson County and using our expertise to construct a positive future for this area.”

A railroad line traverses a large part of the Koppers Coke area. There are several dilapidated and obsolete industrial buildings within the area that was studied. A major part of the property contains dredge material from the Newark Bay area, some of which has not been spread and remains stockpiled. Finally, this area contains numerous environmental constraints, and varying levels of suspected contamination.

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